1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

C. *Sister's sons (or daughters)*[1]		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ School village	4	
	—	5
D. *Relatives by marriage*		
In Sikilile's	2	
„ School village	1	
	—	3
E. *Relationship not exactly determined*[2]		
In School village	2	
	—	2
F. *Former slaves*		
In Sikilile's	1	
„ School village	1	
	—	2
Total of householders		44

621
602

The above figures show more precisely than would several pages of explanation the family nature of the Umbundu village. That the Ovimbundu are patrilocal was noted by Hambly.[3] Whether the proportions which the above figures indicate would hold for all the Ovimbundu could only be determined by gathering similar data over widely representative areas. The same approximate distribution holds for the families represented by 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which I have collected. Matrilocal residence or residence in the wife's village has always been recognized by the Ovimbundu as a possibility, although less desirable than the ideal of patrilocal marriage and residence. Of the two householders in Sekulu Sikilile's village who were related to him by marriage, one was the husband of a daughter and the other a widow of a younger brother, who should have been inherited by a younger brother or a mother's brother of the deceased. Failing that, she might have returned to her father's people, but her having settled in the village of her husband's elder brother is no cause for surprise. My experience leads me to believe that Ngendo is an approximately fair sample of the present strength of patrilocal residence among the Ovimbundu. That the Protestant school village is a real part of this kinship unit is an important fact, the significance of which will be discussed later.

[768]

[1] The two daughters were widows who had come to live with their mother's brothers.

[2] In these two cases relationship was declared to exist, but I failed to find its nature.

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 191.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 18

their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitawila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*).

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikilile's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site.

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving.

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands.

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,(1) and palisades divide one compound [343] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary [343] *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ociwo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,(2) and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by [622] the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by
361 a belt of tall trees.(3) The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than
643 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,(4) usually contains: the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided [343] by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.(5)

345 The *onjongo* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.(6)

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not avail-
[768] able nearby(7) or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length
776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire
774 in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
796 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred cheat *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.(8) On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31)
(2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208.
(5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement.
(8) See below, p.47.

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2)

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4)

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished".

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.209. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the apu tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the stanbo of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.38; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

The head of a specially selected [767] family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, 643 then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The 765 head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings [787] forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); 768 ● neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live in it until the structure collapses.(1)

Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and 765 wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists.

Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an *ocisanda* guides her hand as she distributes the beer.(2)

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.272.
(2) Hambly, op.cit., p.269. Hambly states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days; while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

601

I. Grandparents.
II. Parents.
III. Speaker's generation.
IV. Children.
V. Grandchildren.

Numbers on the left of the sign (=) refer to males, those on the right, to females.

The terms of relationship used in Tables E and F are as follows:

1. *Ukai wange.* My wife (vocative). Ngonga's wife calls him *weyange*, my husband.
2. *Mume, manja, manjange.* Younger brother.
3. *Kota, hasa.* Older brother.
4. *Mbuale.* Sister (vocative). *Mukai wange.* Sister (nonvocative).
5. *Nawa.* In-laws of speaker's generation.
6. *Ndatembo.* In-laws of ascending or descending generation.
7. *Tate.* Father.
8. *Mai.* Mother.
9. *Aphai.* Father's sister (female father).
10. *Omolange.* Child, used for speaker's family only.
11. *Ocimumba.* Children of spouse's family.
12. *Manu, inanu.* Mother's brother (direct ascendant).
13. *Kulu.* An old person in grandparent's and grandchild's generation.
    Sekulu, kukululu. Male grandparents.
14. *Maikulu.* Female grandparents.
15. *Onekulu.* Grandchild of either sex.
16. *Upalume.* Mother's brother's or father's sister's children.
17. *Cikulume.* Father's sister's husband.

NOTE: Age distinctions are made chiefly in the speaker's own generation.

LAW AND GOVERNMENT

In dealing with marriage rites it was stated that a woman had to contribute certain articles to the home; these are the utensils that she uses in her daily work. The baskets, pottery, pounders, and brushes may seem insignificant, but nevertheless there are rules regulating their disposal at death. Her husband will retain some of the articles; the remainder will be shared among the deceased woman's sisters. 428 422

The disposal of a widow is a matter for discussion among the relatives. The husband makes no bequest to his widow and children, though the children may receive a small gift of a pig or some corn. The property of a man is bequeathed to his mother's brother or to his sister's sons. The eldest brother of the deceased or the maternal uncle of the widow takes her to his house along with her children. If her father is alive he may take her. Ngonga says that each responsible relative says, "It is better that you should take her"; at last some one says, "I will take her." 768

When explaining the system of inheritance Ngonga was clear on two points. In the first place wives and children of the deceased are 428

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; [421] there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land.

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [463] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

567 people, especially if they were from outside the Ovimbundu, was one of absolute and abject servitude.

The master had rights of punishment including a death sentence; but Ngonga says that a slave could appeal to the headman of the village if he were starved and cruelly treated. All children of a slave became slaves of the master. As the slave had no property he could not pay a fine; the master would pay the fine then relieve his feelings by beating the slave. Instead of paying the fine the master might sell the slave.

Slaves were not branded or marked in any way. Ngonga has seen runaway slaves hunted with dogs. A slave was not allowed to buy his own freedom. A master could dispose of his slave girls in marriage; for instance, a young girl might be sold to an old man. The condition of the slave is well expressed in Ngonga's own words: "The slave worked hard at everything, then the master said he had done nothing."

Slaves used to go to war to fight with their masters against an enemy. A slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, two very esteemed occupations, but all his work would be for the master. Ngonga says there was no slave market belonging to the Ovimbundu, but every man knew where he could buy a slave. Slaves could act as witnesses in a trial. Slave women were not lent out for prostitu-
[595] tion. A slave owner did not have promiscuous intercourse with his
[768] slave women, but he chose two or three girls as concubines. A slave girl who was married to a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. If a master had married his own slave woman she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her. In some instances the slave woman and her children would be given to the son of her master's brother.

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

361 When choosing a site for a new village, a preference is shown for a hillside, though woods or valleys are at times selected. The foot of cliffs is a favorite site. In addition to the shade afforded by the cliff there was in time past the advantage of being hidden from the view of enemies. Further shelter was afforded by the planting of wild fig trees. Sometimes an *ombala* ("capital") was rendered picturesque by the planting of trees which grow to a great size; such a plan was followed at the *ombala* of Ngalangi.

Caves in the wall of a cliff, likewise rugged hillsides, gave a place of retreat for women and children during an attack. Usually there

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal. 766 672

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick. 766

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration. [565]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

766 643 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 643 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 643 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 643 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 766 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombôlo* or *ocoje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older.

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture.

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[10] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[11] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house.

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was

[10] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[11] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name. 593 551

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15. 857

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bride-wealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish. 593 [593]

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children. 604

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them. 761

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight 602

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leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 23-37.

[25] H. W. Nevinson (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which suggests this possibility (p. 101).

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582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there'.

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-
[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

• 718 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their
[629] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *aka menga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *inahuli*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.